

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1.. (canceled)

2. (canceled)

3. (previously amended) Panel according to claim 14, characterized in that a tile (2) comprises an upper covering plate (8) and at least one lower rigid supporting plate (9), made of a material with high flexural strength and on which the upper plate is attached.

4. (currently amended) Panel according to claim 3, characterized in that a said upper covering plate (8) is a plate with low flexural strength, ~~such as a plate of parquet, tile, stone or marble.~~

5. (original) Panel according to claim 3, characterized in that the lower supporting plate (9) of a tile (2) is a plate such as a plate of sheet metal, stainless steel, wood, wood composite or another composite material.

6. (previously amended) Panel according to claim 14, characterized in that the supporting plate (3) is advantageously a plate made of foam or cork.

7. (previously amended) Panel according to claim 14, characterized in that the tiles (2) are attached on the flexible support plate (3) by adhesive bonding.

8. (canceled)

9. (canceled)

10. (previously amended) Panel according to claim 14, characterized in that it constitutes an assembly that is rigid in the approximately flat state against the forces acting on the top surface of the panel.

11. (previously amended) Panel according to claim 3, characterized in that a tile comprises an upper covering plate (8) disposed on a rigid plate (9).

12. (previously amended) Panel according to claim 3, characterized in that a tile (14) is formed by a strip of covering extending parallel to one edge of the panel (1) and whose length corresponds to the length of said edge, and attached on several rigid plates (9) juxtaposed in the direction of the length of the strip on the supporting plate (3), several strips being juxtaposed on the supporting plate (3).

13. (previously amended) Covering, particularly for a floor, characterized in that it is formed by the contiguous juxtaposition of panels (1) according to claim 14 on a laying surface (12).

14. (previously added) Covering panel, particularly for a floor, comprising:

a plurality of tiles;

a supporting plate having an upper face and a lower face, and a thickness

between said faces, said supporting plate being made from a flexible material that is elastically compressible in the direction of said thickness;

said tiles being individually attached to said upper face of said supporting plate while being juxtaposed thereon in a way that adjacent tiles are in contact with one another along their edges, with edges of adjacent tiles being aligned to form continuous lines on the upper face of the panel; and

portions of said supporting plate beneath said continuous lines formed by said aligned edges of adjacent tiles constituting folding lines along which said supporting plate and said panel are foldable.

15. (previously added) Covering panel according to claim 14, wherein the individual mounting of the tiles on the flexible supporting plate, the flexibility of the supporting plate with said folding lines, and the compressibility of the supporting plate constitute means of compensating for irregularities or flatness defects of a surface on which the panels are laid.

16. (new) Covering panel according to claim 15, wherein said foldable portions of said supporting plate and said panel can be folded until they come in contact with one another.

17. (new) Panel according to claim 3, characterized in that said upper covering plate (8) comprises one of parquet, tile, stone and marble.

18. (new) Covering panel, particularly for a floor, comprising:
a plurality of tiles each having an upper face, a lower face, and a thickness between said upper and lower faces;

a supporting plate having an upper face and a lower face, and a thickness between said upper and lower faces, said supporting plate being made from a flexible material that is elastically compressible in the direction of said thickness;

said tiles being individually attached to said upper face of said supporting plate while being juxtaposed thereon in a way that when said panel is in a flat state, the side faces of one tile is in direct contact with the side face of the adjacent tile, with edges of adjacent tiles being aligned to form continuous lines on the upper face of the panel; and

portions of said supporting plate beneath said continuous lines formed by said aligned edges of adjacent tiles constituting folding lines, said supporting plate and said panel are foldable along said folding lines such that the portions of the supporting plate on both sides of the folding line define an angle smaller than 180° , and the side faces along said folding lines contact with one another to exclude any folding of the panel in the direction of increasing said angle above 180° .